

ARNOLD BENNETT

CLAYHANGER



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By Arnold Bennett

ATV

26 Episodes From 1 January 1976

A coming-of-age story set in the 19th century England about Edwin Clayhanger, a young man who wants to be an architect, but it is expected of him to continue the family's printing business which he accepts for the time being.

Episode 1: Last of a Schoolboy

The year is 1875. Edwin Clayhanger is turned 16 and it's his last day at school. He wants to be an architect. His father - the autocratic printer - has other ideas for his future.

Episode 2: The Architect

Edwin begins architectural drawings, but his domineering father puts him in the print shop immediately. Darius obtains a new press and installs it in the second floor of the print works.

Episode 3: Hilda

Hilda Lessways is 20 and still living with her widowed mother. On the eve of her legal coming-of-age, Hilda is about to inherit the home and the rental property, so she goes to see the local solicitor, George Cannon.

Episode 4: The Five Towns Chronicle and Turnhill Guardian

Time passes: it's 1880. Edwin is still meek, Darius is even more fierce, humiliating him in front of customers. Hilda is now shorthand secretary at the new newspaper, The Five Towns Chronicle and Turnhill Guardian, set up by George Cannon.

Episode 5: Sin and Romance

Hilda travels to London in response to the telegram that her mother is ill. Meanwhile, Edwin is being gently pursued by Janet Orgreave, who is also very fond of books.

Episode 6: Escape to Bleakridge

Edwin, sent to deliver a message to a client at the local, accompanies Big James, and is astonished at his first sighting of a female clog dancer.

Episode 7: Centenary

Hilda prepares to sell both her properties. Janet turns up and takes a relieved Hilda back to her home, where she lives a happier life, socializing with their family, and, meeting Edwin, they go together to the Methodist centenary.

Episode 8: Taking a Share

Edwin redeems his matured savings and buys a set of books for his new shelf. His father is unhappy about it. Hilda is asked by George to go and persuade Sarah Gailey not to give up the boarding house in London.

Episode 9: Brighton

George persuades Sarah Gailey, with Hilda's help, to start a new boarding house in Brighton. He needs to downscale, to recoup some money. Sarah is becoming distraught.

Episode 10: Marriage

George and Hilda are married. Hilda has always wanted him, and now she has him. But she is in for a shocking secret. Meanwhile, back in the Five Towns, Darius is angry about the strikers.

Episode 11: Love

Hilda is returned from London. She would like to see around a print works. After letting the hint go, as usual, Edwin builds up his confidence to invite her round.

Episode 12: Punishment

Edwin and Hilda are deeply in love, but Hilda cannot bear to keep her secret from him. She returns to Brighton to care for Sarah, who is ill. Edwin discovers from Janet that Hilda is married to George. But more news is yet to reach him.

Episode 13: Laid Aside

The family is concerned about Darius. The doctor has advised he not work. Reluctantly, he hands over the keys to the works to Edwin, and finally cedes authority for Edwin to write the cheques and run the business.

Episode 14: The Glorious Jubilee

It's 1887, and 50 years since Queen Victoria came to the throne, the Golden Jubilee. Darius is declining fast, and he has started to rant abusively. Edwin finally stands up to him.

Episode 15: The Chain Is Broken

Darius declines. Edwin now owns the print works, the rest is split between the two sisters. Time passes, and Janet turns up for a visit with a little boy: Hilda's son, George Edwin Cannon.

Episode 16: The Adventure

Edwin is off to Brighton, where he finds Hilda with the bailiffs in. He helps her out, and she tells him the truth about her husband. Back home, Edwin and young George Edwin spend some time together before he goes home.

Episode 17: Epidemic

As Mr Orgreaves is recovering from influenza, young George, already ill from the same fever, arrives on the train from London without his mother, Hilda. Hilda is telegraphed to come up, and she brings Charlie Orgreave, a GP, with her.

Episode 18: The Exquisite Burden

Edwin and Hilda are married in London, with Charlie as witness. To prevent local folk from spreading malicious gossip, they invite several local associates to a tea at the house.

Episode 19: Possessions

Edwin wants to build a new printing works, but Hilda, not long from being nearly destitute, and needing her security, thinks the venture too risky. Instead she would prefer he bought the house, which they are renting, from Maggie, instead.

Episode 20: A Musical Evening

Edwin and Hilda are becoming more combative with other, disagreeing about his plans for the new printing works, and have an uncomfortable disagreement in front of their guests at the first musical evening.

Episode 21: The Orgreave Calamity

Hilda visits Mrs. Orgreave, George's wife. George claims that he is innocent of fraud, and he has requested his wife seek out some persons who can prove this. Mr. Orgreave next door has passed away.

Episode 22: Dartmoor

Mrs Cannon believes she has found someone who can prove George's innocence. Meanwhile, Hilda - then Edwin - visit Janet's relatives in Devon, and a visit to Dartmoor Prison is planned - presenting danger for Hilda, and conflict for Edwin.

Episode 23: Prisoners

George has turned up - he wants to go to America, he cannot stay with his estranged wife, despite the efforts she has made in freeing him - and he wants Edwin to help him get there.

Episode 24: Fall from Glory

Hilda and young George depart for London, and Edwin composes a letter to her about the crisis in their marriage. Auntie Hamps is becoming more ill, and only softens in Edwin's presence.

Episode 25: Death and Dreams

Auntie Hamps passes away peacefully - but the Benbows are fretting about the lack of a will. Hilda stays longer at London because young George has the flu. On her return the Clayhangers seem reconciled.

Episode 26: The Discovery

The Clayhangers spend Christmas Day with Tertius out in the country. On route, Hilda has arranged for them to look at an empty hall for sale. At Tertius's, the men discuss marriage, compromise and freedom.